

Explore the OUTDOORS



Ohio Department of Natural Resources

Explore the Outdoors Partners

American Heart Association
Audubon Ohio
Leave No Child Inside –
Central Ohio,
Greater Cincinnati
National Park Service

Ohio Department of Education
Ohio Department of Health
Ohio Parks and Recreation Association
Ohio Metro and County Parks
U.S. Forest Service, Wayne National Forest

Explore the Outdoors Instructions

- Included in this publication are 10 outdoor activities that can be completed at Ohio parks, forests and nature preserves (listed in the back of this guide).
- You may visit these areas beginning May 10 through September 1 to find an **Explore the Outdoors** poster at welcome centers and kiosks.
- For each activity completed you should record the code listed on the poster in your activity guide.
- Once you have any 8 out of the 10 codes you can go online to **exploretheoutdoorsohio.com**, enter the correct codes and print an 'Outdoor Explorer' certificate of completion. The web site also includes specific location information, hours of operation, as well as dates and times for the Learn From a Naturalist and Get Caught Up in a Clean Up activities.
- The first 1,000 children to enter in the correct codes will receive a Mini Companion Lantern from Coleman.
- Should you have any questions or problems finding a poster, please send an e-mail to **explore@dnr.state.oh.us** and we'll send you the code for that activity.

Dear Ohio Families,

With the fast pace of our daily lives, it's often difficult to slow down and enjoy the tremendous natural resources our state has to offer.

This summer, we're encouraging you to get outside and "Explore the Outdoors" with your family. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources has created this fun, interactive publication to reunite Ohioans, especially children, with Ohio's natural areas.

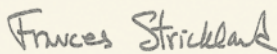
This summer, commit to spending time outside with your family on a regular basis. From fishing and hiking, to just taking a walk in the park, you'll make lasting memories while promoting an active lifestyle for your family.

We know that children who are in touch with their natural environment are healthier, do better in school, have better social skills and self-image, and lead more fulfilled lives. And there's no doubt that healthy children continue to make healthy lifestyle choices as they grow into adults.

We believe that this program will give your families an opportunity to appreciate and believe in the benefits of the great outdoors.



Governor, Ted Strickland



First Lady Frances Strickland

Activity 1

Camp under the stars



Camping is a wonderful way for families to enjoy nature, relax and spend quality time together. You and your family need to plan ahead for your outdoor adventure, but it will all be well worth it.





FUN FACT

Mosquitoes are attracted to people who just ate bananas



Checklist:

tent/tarp

sleeping bag

bug spray

first aid kit

flashlight

food & water



Camping in comfort

Campers have more options than ever before to make camping fun for everyone. Those who don't like the idea of sleeping in a tent should check out other alternatives, including getaway rentals, cottages and lodges, at www.ohiostateparks.org



code

Activity 2



Spot a bird



If you've ever spent time watching a bird build a nest, take a bath or listened to them sing, you are well on your way to becoming a skilled bird watcher.

Birds are fascinating creatures and by taking a closer look we can learn something from every bird we see.



crow



kestrel



killdeer



cowbird



Carolina
wren



humming-
bird

*ruby-throated
hummingbird*



FUN FACT

Hummingbirds are the only birds that can fly backwards

Checklist:

binoculars

camera

field guide

notebook & pen

patience



yellow warbler

How to spot a bird

Stop, look and listen. Birds can be seen on the ground, in small shrubs or high up in trees. Knowing bird calls is also helpful as many species are more easily identified by ear than by eye. The best time to see birds is early in the morning and late day.



Activity 3

Hike or bike a trail



What better way to spend a summer afternoon than to lace up your shoes and head to a nearby park, preserve or forest to enjoy the outdoors?

Hiking is a great way to get outdoors and get active. And it's easy to get started. Just look for a trail near you listed in the back of this publication.



FUN FACT

The average person walks 115,000 miles in a lifetime – that's more than four times around the world



Checklist:

backpack
binoculars
bug spray
camera
compass
hiking stick
snack
sunscreen
water bottle

Fun on the trail

The color challenge: Find 10 things along the trail that are say, red. The first person to find 10 red things wins the challenge and gets to pick the next color!



Trail Mix recipe

In a bowl combine 1/4 cup of any of the following items:

dried fruit
granola
mini chocolate chips
mini pretzels
multigrain cereal
raisins
sunflower seeds
unsalted nuts

Activity 4

Paddle a scenic river



Paddling a canoe, kayak or raft will take you places you can't reach by any other means. You'll discover creatures you won't see on land, such as fish, turtles, frogs and more. Whether splashing a kayak into a stream or exploring a scenic river by canoe, you'll enjoy many new experiences on your journey downstream.



FUN FACT



The original kayak was made with seal skins stretched over a wood frame

Checklist:

dry bags
(for clothing)
first aid kit
life jacket
paddle
sunscreen
water bottle
whistle

Paddling tip

Sit up straight for balance and paddling efficiency. Forward strokes run parallel to the centerline of the boat. To stop, paddle backwards. To move sideways, put the blade in the water parallel to your boat and pull yourself (and the boat) to the blade. Turning strokes are most effective close to the ends of your boat.



Activity 5

Catch a fish



Fishing is a fun activity that's easy to learn. You don't need to know a lot before you go fishing for the first time. You can discover new things each trip. So get out to where the fish are biting and in no time you'll be hooked.





pumpkinseed fish

FUN FACT

Similar to trees, experts can tell the age of a fish by the rings on its scales

Checklist:

fishing pole
tackle box (including
towel & pliers)
bait (live & artificial)
bug spray
sunscreen
first aid kit
cooler with ice



Tips for beginners:

- Children 15 and younger don't need a license to fish in Ohio.
- Beginners should try to catch panfish - or fish that are usually no bigger than a frying pan - because these fish are plentiful and easy to catch.
- Use live bait, such as night crawlers, meal worms or minnows, to increase your chances of catching a fish.

Activity 6

Get caught up in a clean up!



It's up to each of us to help keep our parks and public places clean and litter free. Pop cans, fast-food wrappers and other litter can spoil any picnic, hike or day at the beach. Help keep Ohio clean by participating in a clean up.



FUN FACT

Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV for three hours

Checklist:

heavy-duty
trash bags
gloves
comfortable
shoes

How to clean up:

- Participate in one of the organized summer clean ups listed in the back of this publication. For dates, times and locations visit exploretheoutdoorsohio.com
- Be sure to leave recreational areas clean for the next person to enjoy.
- Check with your local park system to see how you can keep your favorite park, beach or trail clean.

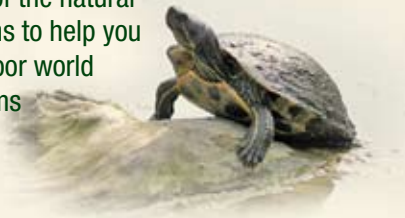


Activity 7

Learn from a naturalist



Park naturalists are teachers of the natural world and offer many programs to help you learn and appreciate the outdoor world around you. Naturalist programs are fun for the entire family and help us learn about the wonders of nature.



midland painted turtle



jumping spider

FUN FACT

A spider's eyes glow in the dark

Popular naturalist programs

Cache In Trash Out - Find treasure and help keep the park beautiful all while using a GPS unit!

Hummingbird Feeding - Hummingbird experts capture and feed hummingbirds and talk about ruby-throated hummingbirds.

Meteor Shower Campout - Bring your lawn chair and blanket and watch shooting stars brighten the summer skies.

Owl Prowl - Take a hike and look and listen for the majestic owls.

For a complete list of naturalist programs, times and locations, visit exploretheoutdoorsohio.com



great horned owl

code

Activity 8



Explore a wetland



When the first settlers came to Ohio, they found lots of areas of shallow water and soggy soil filled with plants, fish, waterfowl and other wildlife.

Today, these areas are known as wetlands. Explore an Ohio wetland to learn all about its unique plants and animals.





river jewelwing dragonfly



FUN FACT

The gray treefrog is Ohio's only frog that can change its skin color

Ohio wetlands

Ohio wetlands vary by the amount of water, soil and plant life they contain and include marshes, swamps, bogs and fens:

Marsh – flooded grasslands

Swamp – flooded woodlands

Bog – spongy “floating carpet” of land (on top of water)

Fen – a wetland that receives its water from underground springs



Inhabitants of a wetland

During your visit to a wetland, try to spot some of the common animals and plants such as frogs, ducks, dragonflies, water lilies and ferns.



code

Activity 9

Discover a nature center



elephant stag beetle



Ohio's nature centers are great places to begin your outdoor adventure. You'll learn something new about nature and the creatures that fly, sprout, chomp, wiggle, leap and bloom around us. Ohio's nature centers will start you on the path to a lifetime of exploring the wonders and mysteries of outdoor Ohio. For a list of nature center hours and locations visit **exploretheoutdoorsohio.com**



five-lined skink lizard

Checklist:
walking shoes
imagination
curiosity



Lakeside daisy

code

FUN FACT

Lizards communicate by
doing pushups



After your visit, apply what you learned:

- Identify a tree along a trail
- Turn over rocks in a creek and see what's underneath
- Find (but don't pick!) and identify a common Ohio wildflower
- Start your birding life list
- Visit each of these habitats: woodland, wetland, prairie
- Draw a picture of a reptile, mammal, insect, and amphibian
- Tell a friend about what you discovered



Activity 10

Swim with a buddy



Ohio has many beaches across the state that you can splash around in on a warm summer day. We're especially fortunate to have access to the scenic and sandy beaches along Lake Erie. When you go swimming, don't forget to swim with a buddy and follow the beach safety tips.



tubercled mussel



deartoe mussel



FUN FACT

White-tailed deer, Ohio's state mammal, can swim up to 10 miles per day

Beach safety tips:

- Only swim inside the buoys at state beaches or lakes.
- Use the buddy system and have one member of your party remain on the beach to watch those who are swimming.
- Exercise caution since lakes, unlike pools, may have murky water making it difficult to see drop offs.
- Bring a cell phone for emergency calls.
- Take regular breaks and relax on the beach.

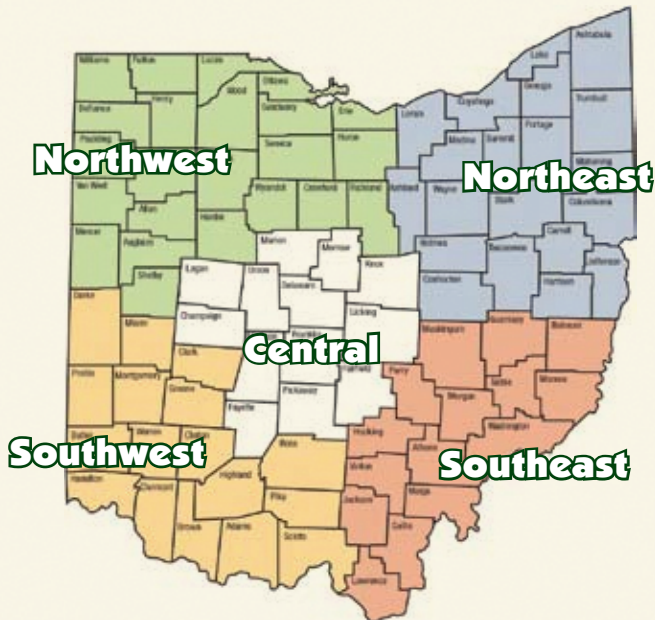
Checklist:

beach towel
sunscreen
pail and shovel
(for sandcastles)
frisbee
snacks



Explore the Outdoors Instructions

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1 *Camp under the stars*

Northwest

East Harbor State Park
Hancock County Riverbend
Recreation Area
Harrison Lake State Park
Lake Loramie State Park
Maumee Bay State Park

Northeast

Findley State Park
Mohican State Park
Punderson State Park
West Branch State Park

Southeast

Barkcamp State Park
Dillon State Park
Lake Hope State Park
Tar Hollow State Park
Wayne National Forest, Lake
Vesuvius Recreation Area
Wayne National Forest, Leith
Run Recreation Area

Southwest

Hamilton County Miami
Whitewater Forest
Hueston Woods State Park
Paint Creek State Park

Pike Lake State Park
Tar Hollow State Park

Central

Deer Creek State Park
Delaware State Park
Indian Lake State Park

2 *Spot a bird*

Northwest

East Harbor State Park
Erie Metroparks Edison Woods
Maumee Bay State Park
Erie Metroparks Osborn Park
Hancock County Litzenberg
Memorial Woods
Hancock County Oakwoods
Nature Preserve
Harrison Lake State Park
Magee Marsh State Wildlife Area
Maumee State Forest
Old Woman Creek National
Estuary & State Nature
Preserve
Seneca County Garlo Heritage
Nature Preserve
Sheldon Marsh State
Nature Preserve

Toledo Metroparks Oak
Openings Preserve
Toledo Metroparks Swan
Creek Preserve
Van Buren State Park
Wood County W.W. Knight
Nature Preserve
Wood County Otsego Park

Northeast

Beaver Creek State Park
Headlands Beach State Nature
Preserve
Mohican State Forest
Mohican State Park
Portage County Bike and
Hike Trail
Portage County Dix Park
Portage County Headwaters Trail
Portage County Towner's
Woods Park
Quail Hollow State Park

Southeast

Hocking Hills State Park
Jackson Lake State Park
Lake Hope State Park
Muskingum County
Collegial Woods

Muskingum County
Recreational Trail
Salt Fork State Park
Wayne National Forest, Ora E.
Anderson Nature Trail
Zaleski State Forest

Southwest

Clermont County Sycamore Park
Cowan Lake State Park
East Fork State Park
Fichtner Outdoor Education
Center
Hamilton County Miami
Whitewater Forest
Hamilton County Woodland
Mound
Hueston Woods State Park
Ross County Buzzards Roost
Nature Preserve
Shawnee State Forest
Shawnee State Park
Warren County Carmody Park
Warren County Clint Fultz
River Park
Walborn Reservoir

Central

Alum Creek State Park

Deer Creek State Park
Delaware State Park
Knox County Mohican Valley Trail
Knox County Wolf Run
Regional Park
Madison Lake State Park
Marion County Myers Woods

3 *Hike or bike a trail*

Northwest

Erie Metroparks Castalia
Quarry Reserve
Fowler Woods State Nature
Preserve
Goll Woods State Nature
Preserve
Hancock County Riverbend
Recreation Area
Harrison Lake State Park
Howard Collier State Nature
Preserve
Lake Loramie State Park
Lawrence Woods State Nature
Preserve
Magee Marsh State Wildlife Area
Maumee Bay State Park
Maumee State Forest

Old Woman Creek National
Estuary & State Nature Preserve
Seneca County Steyer Nature
Preserve
Toledo Metroparks Pearson Park
Toledo Metroparks Swan Creek
Preserve
Toledo Metroparks Wildwood
Preserve
Van Buren State Park
Wood County Otsego Park
Wood County Slippery Elm Trail

Northeast

Beaver Creek State Park
Cleveland Metroparks Ohio&Erie
Canal Reservation
Cuyahoga Valley National Park
Ohio&Erie Canal Towpath
Jackson Bog State Nature
Preserve
Johnson Woods State Nature
Preserve
Lake Metroparks Chapin Forest
Reservation
Lake Metroparks Farmpark
Mohican State Forest
Mohican State Park

Portage County Bike and
Hike Trail
Portage County Dix Park
Portage County Headwaters Trail
Punderson State Park
Quail Hollow State Park
Tinker's Creek State
Nature Preserve

Southeast

Barkcamp State Park
Conkle's Hollow State
Nature Preserve
Hocking Hills State Park
Lake Hope State Park
Lake Katharine State
Nature Preserve
Muskingum County
Collegial Woods
Muskingum County
Recreational Trail
Rockbridge State Nature
Preserve
Salt Fork State Park
Zaleski State Forest

Southwest

Caesar Creek Gorge State
Nature Preserve

Clermont County Sycamore Park
Clifton Gorge State Nature
Preserve
Fichtner Outdoor Education
Center
Halls Creek State Nature
Preserve
Hamilton County Woodland
Mound
Hueston Woods State Park
John Bryan State Park
Little Miami State Park
Ross County Buzzards Roost
Nature Preserve
Scioto Trail State Park
Shawnee State Forest
Warren County Clint Fultz
River Park

Central

Alum Creek State Park
Blackhand Gorge State
Nature Preserve
Deer Creek State Park
Delaware State Park
Knox County Mohican Valley Trail
Knox County Wolf Run
Regional Park

Marion County Terradise
Nature Preserve
Mohican State Park
Mt. Gilead State Park
Shallenberger State
Nature Preserve

4 *Paddle a scenic river*

Northwest

Erie Metroparks The Coupling
Reserve
Grand Lake St. Marys State Park
Hancock County Riverside Park
Harrison Lake State Park
Independence Dam State Park
Mary Jane Thurston State Park
Maumee Bay State Park
Toledo Metroparks Pearson Park

Northeast

Findley State Park
Lake Metroparks Fairport Harbor
Lakefront Park
Mohican State Park
Mosquito Lake State Park
Punderson State Park
Pymatuning State Park

Southeast

Dillon State Park
Lake Hope State Park
Lake Logan State Park
Salt Fork State Park
Wolf Run State Park

Southwest

Buck Creek State Park
Hamilton County Winton Woods
Hueston Woods State Park
Pike Lake State Park
Walborn Reservoir

Central

Alum Creek
A.W. Marion State Park
Deer Creek State Park
Delaware Reservoir
Delaware State Park
Knox County Kokosing Water Trail
Mt. Gilead State Park

5 *Catch a fish*

Northwest

Grand Lake St. Marys State Park
Hancock County Oakwoods
Nature Preserve

Hancock County Riverbend
Recreation Area
Harrison Lake State Park
Lake Loramie State Park
Seneca County Steyer Nature
Preserve
Toledo Metroparks Oak
Openings Preserve
Toledo Metroparks Pearson Park

Northeast

Findley State Park
Guilford Lake State Park
Lake Metroparks Chapin
Forest Reservation
Punderson State Park
Quail Hollow State Park

Southeast

Jackson Lake State Park
Lake Alma State Park
Lake Hope State Park
Lake Logan State Park
Wayne National Forest, Lake
Vesuvius Recreation Area

Southwest

Clermont County Pattison Park
Cowan Lake State Park

Fichtner Outdoor Education
Center
Five Rivers Metroparks
Carriage Hill
Five Rivers Metroparks
Possum Creek
Hamilton County Winton Woods
Pike Lake State Park
Scioto Trail State Park
Sycamore State Park
Walborn Reservoir
Warren County Carmody Park
Warren County Clint Fultz
River Park

Central

A.W. Marion State Park
Delaware State Park
Indian Lake State Park
Knox County Kokosing Water Trail
Mt. Gilead State Park

6 *Get caught up in a clean up!*

Northwest

Grand Lake St. Marys State Park
Independence Dam State Park
Lake Loramie State Park

Maumee State Forest
M. J. Thurston State Park

Northeast

Cleveland Lakefront State Park
Guilford Lake State Park
Lake Milton State Park
Mohican State Forest
Portage Lakes State Park

Southeast

Burr Oak State Park
Dillon State Park
Hocking Hills State Park
Salt Fork State Park

Southwest

Buck Creek State Park
East Fork State Park
Paint Creek State Park
Rocky Fork State Park
Zaleski State Forest

Central

Alum Creek State Park
A. W. Marion State Park
Buckeye Lake State Park
Indian Lake State Park

7 *Learn from a naturalist*

Northwest

Erie Metroparks Edison Woods
Erie Metroparks Osborn Park
Hancock County Oakwoods
Nature Preserve
Hancock County Litzenberg
Memorial Woods
Maumee Bay State Park
Toledo Metroparks Oak
Openings Preserve
Toledo Metroparks Wildwood
Preserve
Van Buren State Park

Northeast

Beaver Creek State Park
Cleveland Lakefront State Park
Lake Metroparks Farmpark
Lake Metroparks Penitentiary
Glen Reservation
Malabar Farm State Park
Portage County Dix Park
Portage County Towner's
Woods Park
Quail Hollow State Park

Southeast

Hocking Hills State Park
Lake Hope State Park
Salt Fork State Park
Sippo Lake Park and the
Exploration Gateway

Southwest

Hamilton County Winton Woods
Hueston Woods State Park
Pike Lake State Park
Ross County Buzzards Roost
Nature Preserve
Shawnee State Park

Central

Deer Creek State Park
Indian Lake State Park
Mt. Gilead State Park

8 Explore a wetland

Northwest

Grand Lake St. Marys State Park
Irwin Prairie State Nature
Preserve
Maumee Bay State Park
M. J. Thurston State Park

Seneca County Garlo Heritage
Nature Preserve
Seneca County Forrest Nature
Preserve
Sheldon Marsh State Nature
Preserve
Springville Marsh State
Nature Preserve
Toledo Metroparks Swan
Creek Preserve
Wood County W.W. Knight
Nature Preserve

Northeast

Cleveland Metroparks North
Chagrin Reservation
Guilford Lake State Park
Jackson Bog State Nature
Preserve
Kent Bog State Nature Preserve
Lake Metroparks Penitentiary
Glen Reservation
Portage County Towner's
Woods Park
Portage Lakes State Park
Pymatuning State Park
Triangle Lake Bog State
Nature Preserve

Southeast

Desonier State Nature Preserve
Dillon State Park
Jackson Lake State Park
Kessler Swamp State
Nature Preserve
Sippo Lake Park and the
Exploration Gateway

Southwest

Clermont County Chilo
Lock 34 Park
Five Rivers Metroparks Cox
Arboretum Conservation
Corner
Five Rivers Metroparks
Germantown Wetland
Hamilton County Miami
Whitewater Forest
Hueston Woods State Park
Rocky Fork State Park
Sycamore State Park
Warren County Hisey Park

Central

Buckeye Lake State Park
Cedar Bog State Nature Preserve
Kiser Lake Wetlands State
Nature Preserve

Mt. Gilead State Park
Stage's Pond State Nature
Preserve

9 Discover a nature center

Northwest

Maumee Bay State Park
Van Buren State Park

Northeast

Beaver Creek State Park
Cleveland Metroparks Rocky
River Reservation
Findley State Park
Lake Metroparks Penitentiary
Glen Reservation
Lake Metroparks Farmpark
Malabar Farm State Park

Southeast

Hocking Hills State Park
Lake Hope State Park
Salt Fork State Park
Sippo Lake Park and the
Exploration Gateway
Zaleski State Forest

Southwest

Aullwood Audubon Center
and Farm
Caesar Creek State Park
Five Rivers Metroparks
Germantown Nature Center
Hamilton County Woodland Mound
Hueston Woods State Park
Pike Lake State Park

Central

Alum Creek State Park
Grange Insurance Audubon Center
Indian Lake State Park
Mt. Gilead State Park

10 *Swim with a buddy*

Northwest

Harrison Lake State Park
Lake Loramie State Park
Maumee Bay State Park

Northeast

Cleveland Metroparks
Huntington Reservation
Geneva State Park
Headlands Beach State Park

Lake Metroparks Fairport Harbor
Lakefront Park
Lake Milton State Park
West Branch State Park

Southeast

Lake Hope State Park
Salt Fork State Park
Strouds Run State Park

Southwest

Buck Creek State Park
Hueston Woods State Park
Pike Lake State Park
Shawnee State Park

Central

Deer Creek State Park
Delaware State Park
Indian Lake State Park

Help protect Ohio's natural areas and wildlife.

A reminder that each tax season you have an opportunity to check-off contributions on your income tax return which will preserve Ohio's wealth of natural resources for generations to come.

When you make a donation to the "Nature Preserves, Scenic Rivers, and Endangered Species" line on your Ohio Income Tax Return, you'll be protecting high quality rivers, significant habitats, such as bogs, prairies and old growth forests, and numerous rare plants and animals.

Your donation to the "Wildlife Diversity and Endangered Species" line on your Ohio Income Tax Return restores habitat so all wildlife has a place to live. Regardless of the size or color, whether it's beautiful or plain, the Division of Wildlife works to ensure that wildlife today will be there for future generations.

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